

THE ACADEMY.  
April 2, 1910.

Spring Cleaning for the Commons

# THE ACADEMY

WITH WHICH ARE INCORPORATED LITERATURE AND THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Edited by LORD ALFRED BRUCE DOUGLAS

No. 1978

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## LIFE AND LETTERS

To the *Contemporary Review* for April Mrs. Disney Leigh contributes some "Early Recollections" of her cousin Algernon Charles Swinburne. The "recollections" are notable if only on account of the fact that Mrs. Leigh has managed to write them without once mentioning the name of Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton. It seems that Mr. Swinburne did actually contrive to be a fairly healthy boy, and to live through a proper boy's boyhood without the assistance of Mr. Watts-Dunton. We do not gather that Mr. Swinburne's boyhood was very greatly different from that of the average boy. He appears to have been fond of Dickens, which was the way with boys of his period, and also of "The Lays of Ancient Rome," which is not unusual. On the whole we are inclined to think that the most satisfactory part of Mrs. Leigh's "Recollections" is contained in the following sentences:

I never met with a character more thoroughly loyal, chivalrous, and—though some of his utterances may seem to contradict it—reverent-minded. His veneration for the aged, for parents, women, and little children—the simple worship of infancy, of which he has left us so many exquisite records—are unlike any other man's that I ever knew. And whatever his religious opinions were or were not, however much they had departed from those of our upbringing—as doubtless they did in latter days—I never, in our years of unfettered and most familiar intercourse, remember him to have said anything to shock or distress me, or anything that was undesirable for me, as child or girl, to hear. And here I should like most emphatically to assert that, however such change of views as I have mentioned might—as it unavoidably must—have caused pain, it never for a moment interfered with or lessened the love, loyalty, and reverence given by Algernon to his own family, or their affectionate intercourse with him.

We are glad to have this testimony, which, while in a sense superfluous, is a sufficient rebuke to those atheistical

writers and talkers who are disposed to count Swinburne among the high priests of their various "movements." Swinburne's supposed "atheism" and "want of reverence" were not of the street-corner order, nor did they appertain to the school of Hyde Park or of the "advanced modern thinkers" who exhibit themselves in some of the theatres and some of the reviews. Although he undoubtedly published matter which can be used for the purposes of the blasphemer, he cannot be charged with having written or thought in malice or with a desire to shock or outrage the feelings of his fellows. Mrs. Leigh reminds us that Swinburne was the author of an extremely fine rendering of a portion of "The Rhythm of St. Bernard de Morlaix," from which we take the following lines:

O land without guilt, strong city safe built in a  
marvellous place,  
I cling to thee, ache for thee, sing to thee, wake for  
thee, watch for thy face:  
Full of cursing and strife are the days of my life;  
with their sins they are fed,  
Out of sin is the root, unto sin is the fruit, in their  
sins they are dead.  
No deserving of mine can make answer to thine,  
neither I unto thee;  
I a child of GOD'S wrath, made subject to death,  
what good thing is in me?  
Yet through faith I require thee, through hope I  
desire thee, in hope I hold fast,  
Crying out, day and night, that my soul may have  
sight of thy joy at the last.  
Me, even me hath the FATHER set free, and hath  
bidden come in;  
In sin hath He found me, from sin hath unbound me,  
and purged me of sin.  
In His strength am I glad, whom my weakness made  
sad; I that slept am awake;  
With the eyes that wept, with the spirit that slept, I  
give thanks for His sake.

To rank the author of such a transcript with the defiant  
atheists is nothing short of preposterous.

We regret to find in the same review an article on "The Libraries Censorship" in which the author, Mr. Charles Tennyson, goes the length of saying that a censorship "inevitably results in reducing the production of literature to the level of the dullest reader, in the decline of sincere and vital work, and the substitution for it of a conventional product designed to meet a conventional demand." We have no hesitation in denying the truth of this proposition. Mr. Tennyson makes a great fuss about the circular in which the libraries outlined what it was that they proposed to do. Even if we accept his own brief statement of the case there is nothing that can be considered inimical to good writing or to "art" in the scheme the libraries have set forward. For all practical purposes, however, the libraries censorship amounts simply to a refusal on the part of themselves to circulate books which in the ordinary operation of the law of the country might form the subject of police prosecution. The libraries have not said this in plain words; but roughly speaking

it is the foundation of their position. Doubtless they have already refused to circulate books to which no legal objection could be raised. At the same time, it is well known that a book must be very foul indeed before the police will take steps to prevent its sale and that a book can be quite unseemly and unfit for general perusal without being flagrantly and abominably obscene. The libraries are quite within their rights to refuse to circulate such unseemly or dubious works, and they do service both to art and to the public when they make such a refusal. Of course we are well aware that the question as to who is to decide what books are or are not fit for general circulation appears to be a difficult question. On the other hand, it is not half so difficult as the opponents of the censorship contend, and the fact of its difficulty does not in the least prove that a censorship is unnecessary or undesirable. It is extraordinary that the opponents of the censorship should invariably put forward their arguments in general terms. Only the other week we had Mr. Gosse complaining bitterly about the censorship, yet at the same time admitting that he had never attempted to read the books about which complaint had been made or which had been withdrawn from circulation in consequence of those complaints. Mr. Tennyson would appear to be in pretty much the same case as Mr. Gosse. He does not mention names, and he is most careful to avoid reference to any particular book or books. In view of what he has to say we can only take it for granted that, like Mr. Gosse, he has spared himself the trouble and pain of reading examples of the kind of book which the libraries decline to handle. Has Mr. Tennyson read "The Yoke," which was stopped by the police some months ago? Will he in the face of that book assure us that he considers the arguments in his article to be altogether valid and reasonable? Does he consider that a censorship which would prevent the circulation of books of the nature of "The Yoke" will "inevitably result in reducing the production of literature to the level of the dullest reader, and in the decline of sincere and vital work?"

The library system of book distribution has never been, and probably never will be, ideal from the point of view of the publisher, and still less from the point of view of the author. The publisher naturally feels that the dictatorship of the libraries in such matters, say, as the length of novels, styles of binding, and character of illustrations is irksome and annoying. The author can never take great delight in the fact that one copy of a book of his supplied from a library may be read by a hundred or more people, while his royalty account is swelled merely to the tune of the royalty on a single copy. So that we can well understand why at the outset a dead set has been made against the library censorship, which, in the eye of publisher and author alike, looks like a further "injustice" to the producer. In point of fact, however, it is not an injustice at all. We must remember, to the credit of the English fictionists, that all of them are not engaged in the production of undesirable or dubious stories. For one writer of foul

ness we should imagine that the library lists can show quite a dozen authors who would scorn to exploit what is unseemly or obnoxious. The fact is that these writers of what Mr. Tennyson would no doubt call "conventional fiction" include in their number the great majority of the most accomplished novelists of our time. And if there has been any injustice at all, we believe that the injustice has been to these decent novelists. There can be no doubt that just in proportion as the demand for improper books has enormously increased under the old régime, so has the demand for decent books enormously decreased. And authors and publishers of decent books alike have suffered accordingly. The libraries must not be disconcerted or allow themselves to be influenced in any way by the carpings of people whose sense of the public good is limited or vitiated. Flagrant impropriety will always be under a ban in a properly constituted community. Nobody is greatly afraid of flagrant impropriety, because, as a rule, it is easy of detection, and those persons who would defend it publicly are very few in number and exceedingly weak on the wing. What we have to fear is foulness cunningly disguised and set forward in the name of fine writing and courageous thinking. It is against this particular brand of article that the library censorship is intended. The censorship may make mistakes, it may be an imperfect censorship, it may on occasion even pass what is palpably dubious, and condemn what is palpably innocuous and desirable. But in the main it will deal out rough justice to those authors and publishers who have been engaged, and who desire still further to engage, in this nefarious and abominable traffic. The libraries have just as much right to censorship as has the private man in his own house. If the head of a household finds that a member of his family is perusing improper works, he has a right to prohibit and to prevent the admission of such works into his house. The libraries are in precisely the same position. You cannot by any stretch of argument compel any trader or any association of traders to deal in goods of which they do not approve. The authors and publishers of obnoxious fiction may lament this fact; but it is nevertheless a fact, and the hurt to their pockets is not of the smallest consequence to anybody.

It appears that the Poets' Club has published a book of verses. The contributors to the booklet include Miss Regina Miriam Bloch, whose work is familiar to readers of *THE ACADEMY*, and a good many other writers, several of whom are almost unknown to poetical fame. The first poem offered to us is entitled "The Children's Moon," the author being a Mr. Smith. We are informed in a footnote that "the club gold medal for 1909 was won by Mr. Smith with this poem." We confess to a rooted objection to gold medals where poetry is concerned, but we quote some lines from Mr. Smith's effort for what they are worth:

"Out in the east a mistral moon  
That's doubled in a sand lagoon  
Of sad reflections hangs above  
The desert lands of Lotos-love.

"Without the walls, beyond the fret  
And quarrelling the towers are set  
Where armadilloes dig by night.  
And round about them, in the light  
Of the mild moon, are rifled graves:  
Mud for the masters, sand for the slaves.



"The seven heavens shall break, we're told,  
And death of angels men behold;  
But the same moon smiles down upon  
The broken shrines of Babylon."

Without the smallest desire to set the Poets' Club by the ears, we shall take it upon ourselves to say that there are other pieces in the book which are quite equally deserving of such gold medals as may be stirring. On the whole, however, the club's sheaf of verses does credit to the members. It is noteworthy, too, that some of the poets appear to be possessed of a sincere admiration for each other. On page 25, for example, we find the appended gallant quatrain, signed F. W. Tancred, and addressed "To Mrs. Cran":

"MADAM:

"Coy beaux to all girls callously enthralled  
Are by a downright passion hipped and galled,  
What time they see your ankles white as milk  
Meshed with a favour of spun turquoise silk."

Mrs. George Cran is, of course, herself a poet of considerable parts; as witness her recent volume published through Mr. Elkin Mathews. And far be it from us to deny, dispute, or otherwise traverse the excellence of her no doubt admirable ankles. But for a poets' club, really, really!

We observe that, according to promise, the benevolent Bottomley has offered the readers of his paper further details as to "half-crown shares" in *John Bull*. It seems that "a scheme is now under consideration for the issue of 200,000 fully-paid half-crown Share Certificates to be allotted pro rata" among Bottomley's readers. "It is proposed that certificates should be made out to Bearer so that they may be passed from hand to hand without the necessity for transfers or other formalities." Which is interesting. And to crown all, we are told that "in view of the large profits and the continued progress of the journal, and having regard for certain important developments which will shortly be announced, each half-crown certificate should in time be worth £1." "Should in time" is a wonderful touch. We should like to have the opinion of the editor of the *Guardian* as to the probable worth of Bottomley's half-crown certificates for delivery, say, on December 31 next. Our own opinion is that anybody who wants them will be able to buy them by the cart-load for a good deal less than a sovereign apiece. In the meantime, *John Bull* has embarked in the poetry business. Under the heading of "Birthdays for the Week" we get the following ravishing verses:—

March 27th.—E. T. REED.

May many years elapse before  
Old Death, the farmer, reaps  
And stacks away the author of  
Those "Prehistoric Peeps."

March 31st.—WILLIAM WALDORF ASTOR.

"Money talks," is sometimes said,  
Likewise "Money earns."  
You've sufficient to ensure  
The happiest "returns."

Really, Bottomley—or is it Anaglypta Vivian!—has missed his vocation.

## THREE SONNETS

### GOBLIN-REVEL.

In gold and gray, with fleering looks of sin,  
I watch them come; by two, by three, by four,  
Advancing slow, with loutings they begin  
Their woven measure, widening evermore,  
While music-men behind are straddling in  
With flutes to mock their feet about the floor,—  
To quirk their twisted legs to fiddles thin,  
Fifes too, and jangled dulcimers, and store

Of stranger sounds: I see them steal away  
With cunning glances; sudden their faint shoon  
Are no more heard; but far away the dogs  
Bark at some lonely farm; and haply they  
Have clamber'd back into the dusky moon  
That sets beyond the marshes loud with frogs.

### AUTUMN IN ARCADY.

What wraiths are these of shepherds peaked and chill,  
That roam unhappily the stricken plain?—  
Where summer dallied once, and once again  
Came golden August over mead and hill—  
Must they with ashen faces linger still—  
Starved wretches pale with fate?—where wind and rain  
Despoil the blackening sheaves of ruined grain;  
Let them go hence, who have none other will.

Long since they lightly wove in orchard-bowers,  
Staves of Æolian music rich and sweet,  
When blithe down courtly measures went their feet;  
Who still would crown their youth with fresher flowers  
From Beauty's lordship; and with song would greet  
The breezy morn that bore them infinite hours.

### THE PAST.

Touch now the lute in soft and dreamful wise,  
As we who listen give a thought for those  
Who dwelt here long ago; and saw the skies  
Flush'd in yon evening west with tragic rose.  
Their melody was yours; and in your face  
The charm of their brief passion I behold,—  
Frail beauty fugitive like April's grace,  
And yet delaying like the sunset-gold.

Ah summer night of peace, and early wings  
About the gates of dawn,—can heaven say  
More than thy lyric dimness leading day  
From shadow unto splendour?—whisperings  
Of death are in the leaves, and yet we pray  
That dying we may hear the bird that sings.

S. S.

## SPRING CLEANING FOR THE COMMONS

THE political situation becomes at once more ludicrous and more dangerous with the lapse of the session. Having sowed the wind, the almighty Liberal Government is fain desperately to reap the whirlwind. It is a Government which has lived from the beginning out of peevish cries. It has screamed about Chinese labour; it has screamed about licensing and about education; it has screamed about the Budget; it has screamed about the House of Lords. Its latest shriek is for government, not by the people, but by the Crown and the House of Commons. Lord Hugh Cecil has pointed out to the admiration of the sagacious that government by the House of Commons means government by the Cabinet. There was nothing precisely original about the remark; but it has been received with plaudits and acclaimed for high political philosophy. In point of fact, it is a bare statement of half a truth, the whole truth being that government by the House of Commons means government by the Cabinet,

and that government by the Cabinet means government by the reactionary and the irreconcilable—at any rate, when your Government happens to be a Liberal Government. The ignominy of Mr. Asquith is of the completest. Himself and his Cabinet have been pushed to the edge of the precipice, and they view the abyss with frightened and anguished eyes. It is all very merry to ride to the devil, till you come to his grisly posterns. Once there even the fool and the charlatan find it in their nature to quake. No person of understanding can have failed to be aware that Mr. Asquith's government was bound in the long run to bring itself to the profoundest and most squalid of griefs. If the tribulation were a matter only for Mr. Asquith's Government, or a matter only for the Liberal party and its parasites, one might smile and be content and even thankful. But it is not alone the wreck of a party and the disgrace of its leaders that we have to contemplate; the vital danger and the ultimate burden and disgrace being to the country. Until now the party system in the administration of public affairs has worked more or less efficiently upon certain obvious and well defined rules. There have not been wanting persons who have spoken and written of that system as a "game," and there can be no doubt in the world that it has frequently deteriorated into a game or into a system that was not operating purely for the good of the country, but mainly for the benefit and advantage of a party. At the same time, the large and principal rules were there, and approved and respected by virtually all of the players. Put briefly, these rules are of the simplest. The party which can raise the greater number of votes at a General Election is called upon to form a Cabinet and go into power. It proceeds to make proposals for legislation of a kind which is supposed to be desired by the majority of the voters. These proposals are discussed in the Commons, and if there is a majority in the Commons they are passed and sent to the Lords for final approval. If the Lords disapprove, the proposals go by the board, unless it is felt that a further appeal should be made to the country, in which case the ultimate opinion of the people is to be considered final and decisive. Within these lines many a redoubtable political game has been exploited, and, on the whole, the country has remained master of itself and of its liberties. With the advent of Asquith, Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, and Company, however, "the game" was destined to develop into a tyranny. Wild-cat legislation and all manner of political dodges framed to delight the mob, and to establish and make permanent the rule of the mob, were brought up in the House of Commons and solemnly discussed with a great waste of public time and with great disadvantage and enormous danger and loss to the country. Mr. Asquith's Licensing Bill was a sufficiently flagrant case in point. A wild-cat business from beginning to end, it was ultimately rejected by the Lords; but in its passage through the Commons the finance of an enormous industry suffered severely, and the loss to those persons who are engaged in that industry and the consequent loss to the country has to be reckoned by hundreds of thousands of pounds. Then there was the Education Bill, a pure sop to the mob, designed as all sops for the mob have to be, for the appropriation of other people's property to mob purposes. Here, again, the Lords did their duty. And in the bitter end, of course, we have David's Budget for the pillage and spoliation of property. We do not believe for a moment that Mr. Lloyd George or the Prime Minister or any responsible Minister of the Crown ever dreamed in his wildest moments that the Budget for 1909 could be passed. We do not believe that the Liberal party, as represented by the Cabinet, desire even now that the Budget of 1909 should be passed. It was a Budget introduced purely for sensational, destructive, and mischievous purposes, and behind it was the desire that the mob should be tickled and flattered to death, so that when the next General Election came round the Liberal Government might be sure of a new lease of power and emolument. In the exercise of their proper duty to the State the

Lords kicked out the Budget. An astute Prime Minister, and, for that matter, a company of ordinarily astute carpet-bagging demagogues, would have been content with this natural result; particularly as it was a result which in their hearts the leaders of the party desired and approved. They should have been content to have gone to the mob and said "Behold, we are your friends; we have done our best to get for you 'all you want'; but the Constitution is against us and we have failed. We must try again, and some day no doubt 'all you want' will be yours." This would have been the proper if specious and sophisticated attitude of the carpet-bagger who manages to retain, as we hope Mr. Asquith still does retain, some scruple of regard for the common welfare of England. We are of opinion that if Mr. Asquith had been able to have his own way in the matter he would have stopped short precisely here and in the manner indicated. But, unfortunately for Liberalism, he considered himself to be in no position to stop short. He and his minions fired the passions and cupidity of their own mob to a pitch which would allow of no turning back. They had shouted out vain promises and ill-considered threats at the top of their voices. They had said in effect: "This Budget shall become law whether the Lords like it or not. If the Lords will not have it we for our part will not have the Lords. In brief, if we cannot have the game our own way according to the rules of the game, we will declare the rules to be null and void." By the skin of their teeth and the help of the Irish they got back into power and proceeded to wriggle and to prevaricate and to find excuses for breaking their own promises. The mob, however, was not to be cheated even by the blessed word ambiguity; neither were the Irish, who are a mob to themselves. So that here we are in the very prettiest pickle that England has encountered in the whole course of her history. Mr. Asquith is a broken, ruined, and disgraced leader; Mr. Lloyd George is a broken, ruined, disgraced, and ridiculous Chancellor. There is nobody even on their own benches who will venture to say a plain straight approving word of either of them. In the last resort they have had to put themselves under the tender tyranny of Mr. Redmond, and for a spokesman and fugleman they have had again to fall back upon that loquacious, irresponsible caperer, Mr. Winston Churchill. Six months ago Mr. Churchill was pulled up on the curb. He was felt by his admirers on the back benches to have overstepped the mark and to have opened his mouth at far too great a width. Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George found it necessary to sit upon his curly head, and for a time Winston sang small and whistled reedily. The Cabinet, not to say the strenuous Liberal party, has done its best to do without him. He is young, they argued, and a trifle hot-headed and over-zealous and over-rhetorical. Age doubtless will improve him and bestow upon him the ballast which he so obviously lacks. Until the other day Winston sat in his corner a reprovved, well threatened, and downcast scholar. Mr. Asquith came back to Westminster with his head up and his fist shut and a determination to win, tie, or wrangle. He would show the world that there was a great deal of Cæsar and Napoleon, not to say Machiavelli, left in him. For a true and proper henchman he would have Mr. Lloyd George. Winston must not put his jammy and grimy finger into the pie any more; he must sit up and say his piece like a good, modest, obedient boy. Well, we have seen what we have seen. Mr. Asquith has no more fight left in him than a bag of hay. Cæsar has been hit in the wind; Napoleon is on his way to St. Helena; Machiavelli won't wash. Even the tricks and doubles and shuffles and cunning of the little fox from Wales are proved futile and of no further advantage. What have we to do? We can only gasp feebly for Winston. "Winston, my child, you need not be a good boy any longer. Up, my little splutterer, and let 'em have it. Shout for Crown and people and for anything else that pleases you, and we will go cut unobserved while you make naughty noises." It is all very pitiful, and, up to a point, distinctly amusing.



There is nothing to be said for the present Government but *Vale*. They have got to go, and there can be no returning. Meanwhile, it seems to us that the Lords should set themselves to work with a view to abating and destroying this dangerous nuisance called "the game." The majority in the Commons has proved to demonstration that majorities in the Commons are no longer to be trusted, and that the rules by which majorities in the Commons exercise their power are capable of the gravest abuses. Those rules must in some way be modified and made stricter and more severe. The problem is a large and difficult and momentous problem. It requires to be approached without haste and without passion, and with a deliberate and single eye to the good government of the Empire and the good government of the Empire only. It is not a question for either party or any of the parties. It is a question for the wisdom and understanding and honesty and patriotism of the Empire at large, and the House of Lords is the instrument through which these forces will in the long run have to work. What the common sense of the country, as opposed to mob cupidity and passion, demands is the reform of the House of Commons. The procedure of the House and the bases of that procedure must be altered in such a way that they can never again become the private weapons and playthings of the unscrupulous political adventurer. There must be no more government by bogey and sop and compact, and there must be no more dictatorship by persons out of Hibernian morasses or Scotch coal-pits. Huckstering and bargaining and buying and selling and squaring and palm-greasing among carpet-baggers and demagogues and place-seekers must cease. The Lords must devise the means and determine and settle the means, and propound and apply the means, and they may be sure that, come what may, they will have the people of England at their back. The mob need not be counted or noticed in the struggle. It makes a horrid and heart-shaking uproar; but it is only fools that can ever be afraid of the makers of "zoological noises."

## DINNERS FOR POETS

We live in an age of dulness qualified with cheap sentiment. Our hapenny press, not to mention the pennorths and for that matter the sixpennorths, is deaf and blind to most things which are important; yet the maudlin drop for immediate shedding is well within the hapenny compass and range, and apparently can be extracted from the dullest and most hidebound by a mere paragraph. A child in a slum prays for food to Santa Claus "up the chimney," and catches fire and is burnt to death. On the instant hapenny England is bidden to weep, which it does with a great deal of gusto, and the million readers of this, that, and the other hapenny sheet give practical expression to their sympathy by subscribing the noble sum of fifteen-and-sixpence for the "bereaved parents." Or some unfortunate out-of-work clerk threatens suicide, embellished with a trifle of preliminary murder, and the noble philanthropist Bottomley enquires whether the noble army of dull persons who support him with their pennies do not happen to have "a bob or two to spare" for the unfortunate young business gentleman with a homicidal and suicidal intention. We shall not assert that there is much that is wicked or undesirable in these forms of benevolence. It is more blessed to give than to receive, and persons who stand in need of the charity of their fellows are not compelled to be particular as to the channels through which the charity may flow. The amazing part of it all is the thinness of the stream, the poverty of the response. We have always believed in the good-heartedness of the English. Particularly have we believed in the good-heartedness of the masses and of the poor. As one of the lesser lights of vaudeville has been wont to warble:

"It's the poor that help the poor  
When poverty knocks at the door."

Nothing could be truer, or more creditable to the poor. On occasion, however, the middle and more exalted classes take their turn. They are excellent, and one may even say "splendid," when a Mansion House Fund is on foot, or when His Majesty the King or Her Majesty the Queen leads a rally for the aid of some hospital or charitable institution. We have nothing but blessings whether for poor or for rich in these regards. At times, however, philanthropy, or benevolence, or altruism, or the desire to do somebody material good, assumes extraordinary forms. We have an example of this precise if curious desire to be kind before us at the present moment. The poet, as we all know, is a figure which the English mind does not habitually associate with glory. The English dulness is such that your poet must live to a very great age before anybody will admit in his lifetime that he is a poet at all. If he chooses to die early, the glistening immediate hapenny tear is sometimes bestowed upon him, and his widow is presented with seven shillings procured for her through the benign medium of the pathetic hapenny paragraph. In a sense this is as it should be; inasmuch as if the English admiration for the poet were to blossom to the extent of keeping him in metrical leisure out of charitable funds the country would very shortly be called upon to provide for at least a hundred thousand poets. At the time of writing, the number of poets alive in England probably does not exceed fifty. Some day perhaps a wealthy person possessed of an eye for the comic will invite them all to dinner. Meanwhile serious benevolence has been at work, and we have tidings of a dinner which is to be given, not to poets, but to the next best thing, namely, the descendants of poets. That extremely poetical organ, the *Daily Chronicle*, offered yesterday to a startled town full particulars of what it is pleased to call "The Coming Unique Gathering." Here is the *Chronicle's* account of what is about to happen:

The list of poets' descendants who are to dine together at the Holborn Restaurant next Tuesday, on the anniversary of Swinburne's birthday, is practically complete, and, considering the difficulties encountered by the Poetry Recital Society in tracing them, the result is extremely creditable.

Given more time, other living descendants of the great poets will doubtless be found, perhaps more nearly related to them than those who will figure as their representatives on this occasion. As it is hoped to make the event an annual one, the search for such relatives will naturally be continued.

One of the happiest circumstances is that the lady who will represent the father of English poetry at the banquet is also a collateral of the poet most recently dead.

The Earl of Crewe, the patron of the Poetry Recital Society, is expected to preside, and among the members and guests will be the Duke of Norfolk (himself a descendant of a minor poet—Henry Howard), Lady Lindsay, Lady Strachey, Lady Shelley, Miss Helen Mathers, Lady Constance Leslie, Miss Marjorie Bowen, and Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, perhaps the best-known writer of verse in America, who is now on a visit to England and has just joined the society.

Baroness de Bertouche, another member, will bring as a guest the Maori chief Rangiuia. His title to be present is that he is the descendant of a long line of tribal bards. He composes poetry, and, attired in his native costume, will, after the dinner, chant some of the Maori poems which have been handed down from generation to generation, without ever being committed to writing.

On the face of it this is very wonderful. "One of the happiest circumstances is that the lady who will represent the father of English poetry at the banquet is also a collateral of the poet most recently dead." What could be happier? Then there is the Duke of Norfolk, who, poor devil, is the descendant of only "a minor poet." Also there are Miss Helen Mathers and Miss Marjorie Bowen, who do not appear to be descended from poets

at all, and, happiness of happiness! we are to have the Maori chief, who, "attired in his native costume, will, after the dinner, chant some of the Maori poems which have been handed down from generation to generation without ever being committed to writing." It seems a pity that our wisest critic of poetry, Bottomley, attired only in two pieces of old scrip with Joint Stock Trust illuminated upon them, will not be present to chant to the over-fed assemblage that beautiful poem entitled "Do not Trust Him, Gentle Maiden"; or that his henchman Vivian, clothed on with a feather-bow, will not recite the touching stanzas commencing:

"I have no pain, dear mother, now,  
But, oh! I am so dry."

To be serious, however, this dinner of the descendants of poets is to be honoured with the presence of persons who claim to be of the blood of Chaucer, James I. of Scotland, the Earl of Surrey, Spenser, Shakespeare, Waller, Milton, Suckling, Dryden, Wycherley, Watts, Pope, Shenstone, William Collins, Burns, Wordsworth, Scott, Coleridge, Southey, Byron, Wolfe, Shelley, Mrs. Hemans, Macaulay, Lytton, Helen Lady Dufferin, Tennyson, Sidney Herbert, Coventry Patmore, Adelaide Procter, Rossetti, Sir Edwin Arnold, and Swinburne. A mighty and enthralling list! The names of the descendants of these great persons, however, are another affair. We do not find among them the name of a single poet of distinction, or of a single prose-writer of distinction, so that evidently poetry, like wooden legs, does not always run in families. The gathering will no doubt satisfy the *Daily Chronicle's* description of it as unique. But one is puzzled to imagine what useful or intelligent purpose is to be served by it unless that purpose be a charitable purpose. Some of the poets in the glittering list the *Daily Chronicle* puts forward may have known what it was to be short of a dinner, and admitting this much, it may conceivably be fitting that as dinners would be of no use to them in their present situation their descendants may for once in a way be fed at the cost and charge of benevolence. For the rest there is precious little to hope. Poetry will not be benefited by the assemblage and neither will the poets' descendants. Obviously it is a thousand pities. The Poetry Recital Society has a great deal to answer for. One would have thought that such a society would in the mass, at any rate, have possessed a sufficient sense of humour to perceive that the whole business is as fantastic and as ridiculous as business well could be. It is significant that no live English poet has been procured to assist, and in some way to justify the proceedings. Mr. Binyon and Mr. Stephen Phillips, both of whom are poets, and both we believe descended from Wordsworth, do not figure in the list of guests; neither does the Poet Laureate, who one would have thought would have made an excellent chairman, even if only by virtue of the mantle he happens to wear. We are exceedingly glad for our own part that these gentlemen, and others who might readily be mentioned, have refrained from availing themselves of what might appear to the vulgar to be the chance of a lifetime. We trust that for the sake of poetry the speeches will be reasonable and just a little blushful. We think that the star turn should devolve upon the Maori Chief; particularly as not a single person present will be able to understand what he says.

## REVIEWS

### BRITISH INDIA

*Administrative Problems of British India.* By JOSEPH CHAILLEY. Translated by Sir William Meyer, K.C.I.E. (Macmillan and Co. 10s. net.)

#### FIRST NOTICE.

THE above work first appeared in France under the title "L'Inde Britannique," and in his preface M. Chailley writes, "now that I publish this volume, I desire to

state that it is not my sole work: it is also that of my friend, Sir William Meyer, the author of the translation which is appearing simultaneously in London," and he accentuates Sir William's share of responsibility for both the French and the English editions. by adding that "it fell on me to retranslate into French the so-called translation." So it bears the imprimatur of an eminent Indian Civil Servant. It is dedicated to Lord Morley with a fitting tribute, so this review is not out of place in our this week's issue as a sequel to the review of Lord Morley's speeches in our last.

#### BOOK I.—FIELD OF ADMINISTRATION.

And what a vast field India is ("rather a Continent than a country") is conveyed in good clear descriptive writing which rises to its highest excellence in the sketch of the Himalaya, "which contains all kinds of landscape—arid deserts, smiling valleys with luxuriant vegetation, glaciers which would cover a county," and "countless marvels of nature" are told of, salient among which is Darjeeling surrounded by giant peaks "thick clouds mounting their sides, their outlines veiled at dawn by rosy mists, while the valleys still slumber in white haze." From the hills to the plains, and there the water problem first holds M. Chailley's attention. In the happier plains watered by the great rivers, fed by mountain snows, the cultivator can with the Psalmist lift up his eyes to the hills from whence cometh his help—and water and to spare comes in due season. But through vaster regions he is dependent only on rainfall, and M. Chailley speaks of the whole country (cultivators and officials) "turning their eyes to the sky to implore or curse the clouds that pass by them." Then due notice is taken of rainfall and of temperature with their resultant influence on mortality and health and the consequent "nomadic character" of British administration. "Picturesque India" carries the reader on a rapid tour through the peninsular continent which does not for one moment pretend to make known to him either its wonders or its monotony—for both loom large in M. Chailley's impressions. The short twilight, the darkness of the night, breed sights and sounds "which must have actively contributed to convert modern Hinduism into a motley Paganism." The silence of the land, too, oppresses him, and the gradual process of deforestation (now, of course, being skilfully checked and repaired) which leaves no fuel for the villagers is partly explained by an English official friend: "The ox is silent," he said, "because his enemy, the wild beast, is prowling around," and he bids the author rejoice that "wheat will shortly grow on what had been a tiger's lair." The India of the present lives alongside the India "which tries to shut itself up in its loved past," and this is exemplified by characteristic sketches of Bombay, Karachi, and Rangoon, "that new and wonderful creation of British genius"; Calcutta, Ootacamund and Simla. "All the working and frivolous elements in India go to Simla when they can, and the rest dream of going there." But the picture of Hyderabad—described as a city which seems to have come out of "The Arabian Nights," "a city of fanatics and still more sceptics where Haroun al Raschid would find himself at ease"—is the most arresting. It is a thousand years away from the present, two hours' drive from Goleonda, and twenty minutes only in a carriage from the residency and cantonments of Secunderabad.

A chapter on population tells us that the census of 1901 declared it to be 294,361,056. "The minute exactitude of this figure is significant," and we read of a mass of statistics tacked to the census which took the services of 1,325,478 enumerators to collect. We cannot help thinking that the executive details of this census must have been exasperating to a vast number of the people counted. A host of figures dealing with increase and decrease, birth rate, death rate, and distribution would be monotonous to read were it not for the French love of statistics, and the quick deductions drawn from them which M. Chailley has known how to make infectious. When we learn that 147 idioms are in use we appreciate



how kindly we have been treated by an author who deals with the question of *language and races* in six short pages, and then passes on to their religions. But he finds time to remark that no race has been able to combine other elements and "raise that fine flower of civilisation which we call a nation." India has never been a single nation—M. Chailley tells us that there are at present in India "two great religions and several little ones." Hinduism and Islam are of course the two great ones, and then only seven *little* religions are named. It will surprise many readers that Buddhism is among these latter, and has so small a number of votaries in the India that was its birthplace. It has vanished from Benares where its founder began his teaching. The points of departure and approach between Indian creeds are set forth. Their different moral and social aspects are discussed as well as the economic burden that they impose on their votaries—most heavy amongst Hindus. The sacredness of animal life to the Hindu, above all the life of a cow, draws the line which severs them most from followers of other faiths, and many examples are given of the extent to which veneration of life is carried. The mother spares the life of the scorpion that stings her child! (Very seldom, we should think.) An example of the reverence for the cow is given on page 57, where we read that "soldiers in the Transport Corps marching to Simla became mutinous because they were ordered to convey Australian preserved beef." This must be accepted with very great reserve, and the highest Indian military authority in England discredits it. The men of the Supply and Transport corps, it should be remarked, are only *enlisted followers*, not soldiers. But that is a detail among many interesting anecdotes. Then the attitude of the Indian Government towards Christianity on one hand, and the creeds of the country on the other, is criticised and discussed, but in no unfriendly tone, great credit being accorded to the large spirit of fairness and toleration which is its basis. From religion to caste is a short and inevitable step. "The most remarkable social phenomenon in India." Many authorities are quoted for its origin. Sir Herbert Risley defines it clearly on page 98 as partly due to heredity, partly due to occupation or craft. M. Senart traces the phenomenon to Aryan origin. A race of conquerors of fair skin and fine features impose themselves on the inferior Dravidian race. Against this theory some urge that caste rules are stricter in Bengal, where the Dravidian type is more evident, than in the North-West, where the Aryan type exists more pure. To these M. Chailley replies that "purity of blood is most valued where it is most impure." It is to priest-rule that caste owes its rigidity. But the rich Hindu of lower caste can raise himself by change of soil and much diplomacy. The Brahman hierarchy takes the place of the Heralds' College and a pedigree is found. Utilitarian views have prevailed, too, in considering the lower castes. A list of menial crafts is given which do not defile, and a Brahman may drink water from the bearer of his palanquin without pollution. It would be very inconvenient if he could not. Thus peopled, "agriculture is the traditional occupation of India." M. Chailley tells us that two-thirds of the whole population live by agriculture, and that, better still, 52 per cent. of the population are land-owners or tenants, only 12 per cent. labourers. But he does not view the lot of these agriculturists as a very prosperous one. It is a poor country. Its worst curse is slackness, and an amusing distribution of four men's labour is given—one resting, one doing nothing, one looking on, and the fourth helping the other three. Add to these two handicaps reckless extravagance, especially in marriage ceremonies, and so the result is inevitable—the land is in the hands of money-lenders, who, moreover, cannot be dispensed with. The social reform of such a heterogeneous mass of peoples is, indeed, a labour of Hercules, and M. Chailley shows what a short stride has been taken along that stony path. Caste blocks the way at every step, with child marriages, enforced widowhood, and its Purda system, which, in common with the Zenana system of Islam, keep

the high-caste ladies isolated and ignorant, and hardly conscious of the wretchedness of their lives. The founder of the association Brahmo Samaj—which is a society active in its efforts for reform of family-life—acclaimed the abolition of Suttee by Lord William Bentinck in 1829. He had also foresight. He held that society without religion was lost. And M. Chailley rightly deplores the purely secular education of the Indian schools and colleges with the inevitable trend to pantheism or an unavowed atheism. The Reform Party have their own work to do, dealing with these three elements: First, some hundreds of good, patriotic Hindus who would draw inspiration from the West; second, some thousands, followers of English thought and philosophy, who dream of English institutions in India; third, the remaining millions of Hindus who continue wrapt up in admiration of India of the past and intent on following its ways.

Not too long a space is given to political reform. The ideal of Social Reformers is to reconstruct a new India. The National Party aim at an immediate instalment of political power. So the two parties reveal themselves to M. Chailley. The National Party and the National Congress receive severe treatment from M. Chailley in spite of much sympathy with their aspirations. A true citizen of a great republic, he thinks that England has departed from the high ideals of some of India's earlier rulers, which was to create an *India for the Indians*, "to make a nation of them and prepare them for the task of self-government. That task accomplished, in the course of a century or two they would retire, leaving to its own destinies a glorious child of their genius." Yes, it would have been a splendid rôle of an *idealist* people. But we are not an idealist people. Perhaps too little so. It is true that as a counterpoise to the demands of the National Party now it would be Machiavellian strategy—for *India for the Indians* is far from being their cry. But had Britain adopted it, would not the demands of the National Party have gone further, and will England leave "a glorious child of her genius" if she ever withdraws? It is true that M. Chailley gives us a century or two, and much may happen in that time in India and elsewhere; and he now rightly concludes that British opinion will not consider a policy of evacuation. We are told that it is not to be considered that India is wearied of British supremacy, and M. Chailley quotes the spontaneous mourning on the death of Queen Victoria as evidence of loyalty. But he dwells on the difficulty of focussing that loyalty. To give it impersonation: Viceroys come and go, and few are liked; magistrates and collectors change their stations too frequently. "Why not," asks Mr. Chailley, "give to India a member of the Royal Family as a sub-King?" Why not, indeed? And let the Indian Government under such a Royal Viceroy rule much more independently of the Secretary of State than to-day.

A chapter on the personal attitude of Europeans and Indians ends Book I. Here M. Chailley tells us he must walk warily, and he approaches the question very humanly and with much understanding. In these pages there is very wholesome reading for Englishmen. It is well to see through the glasses of others. Without changing well-based views, it is well to widen one's vision and to take a fresh perspective sometimes. Such is the tendency of M. Chailley's most interesting and graceful writing.

## THE OLYMPIAN GAMES

*International Sport.* By THEODORE ANDREA COOK. (Constable and Co. 3s. 6d.)

It is to a Frenchman that the world owes the revival of the Olympian Games. We English, though pioneers of sport, are in our sports, as in other fields of life, unimaginative. "The ancient games were dead. We left them in their grave." To Baron Pierre de Coubertin first came the thought that the "games suppressed by the edict of the

Emperor Theodosius might be revived in a modern setting." And he called together the first Olympic Congress at the Sorbonne in the spring of 1894, "where the 'Hymn of Apollo,' just discovered at Delphi, was sung again to the original notes of music composed for it so many centuries before Christ."

This congress and this hymn inspired the representatives of nine other countries to restore again in international form the games which had embraced all the off-shoots of Greece from the Crimea to the Pillars of Hercules so long ago. From the first inception of these games by Baron Pierre de Coubertin to the present day Mr. Cook has in this volume traced the progress of the idea of international sport and how it has been focussed into a practical scheme which has stood the test of five revivals—four, strictly speaking. The Olympiad series comprise officially only the following meetings that have been held: Athens, 1896; Paris, 1900; St. Louis (U.S.A.), 1904; and London, 1908. But games were held in Athens, too, in 1906 (though outside the international programme), most nations being represented there, and all the great ones with the exception of Spain. The real interest to the general reader centres mostly in these games, and in the account Mr. Cook gives of Athens itself and of his voyage there and back in Lord Howard de Walden's steam yacht, *Branwen*. Mr. Cook joined the British Olympic Association in 1905, and in 1906 captained at Athens the British fencing team which competed with the *épée de combat* "upon that historic soil." Lord Desborough was accredited by the British Government to represent the country and was also one of the fencing team, which further comprised Sir Cosmo Duff Gordon, Edgar Seligman, and C. Newton Robinson, with Lord Howard de Walden as spare man. Mr. Cook reminds us that the Olympic Games of old had for their object rivalry in intellect and art as well as in athletics and feats of arms. While the superb youth of Greece vied with each other in the Stadium, Pindar sang, and Myron and Phidias hewed those masterpieces from marble and stone which have been for all time the marvels of the sculptor's art. So it is the conception of the International Olympic movement that these meetings at the great centres of modern civilisation shall internationalise culture, while the healthy competition in manly sports teaches, as nothing else can, the best representatives of the nations to value the best qualities in their rivals. In this spirit has Mr. Cook written "International Sport," and above all is the story of the games at Athens in 1906 instinct with such feeling. He brings classical erudition and much artistic knowledge to help the reader who has not been there to appreciate the glories that surround the historic ground where those games were held. And better still can those of us who know that "sacred spit of land" feel the inspiration of the "bright blue sky and dazzling white light" under which the games were held, though "the snowy marble of the Stadium" may not be familiar to older visitors, for the Stadium has only been restored by the munificence of a Greek citizen for the revival of the games.

Pre-eminent amidst all the wonders of those surroundings stands out "the cold and chaste perfection of the Parthenon against a burning sky," and in the pages he devotes to this peerless monument Mr. Cook shows accuracy and historic retrospect and great reverence. He reveals in himself the capacity "to arouse the ancestral Pagan who lies sleeping in the tissues of us all, and to see the meaning of that severely splendid embodiment of the best which Paganism could bestow." If the athletes of the Stadium disposed of one tithe of Mr. Cook's erudition and artistic feeling their education in international culture would indeed be progressive beyond the wildest hopes of the revivers of the Olympian Games. But we are not sure that most of them would quite follow Mr. Cook's rhapsodies, in which a very unusual knowledge of technique is displayed, and where the dead languages are employed (sometimes untranslated) to an extent bewildering to any but those whose classical education has been fairly advanced, and to these, again, bewildering, except to the happy few who keep up their classics.

It is, of course, a matter of great pleasure to the author

that the fencing team of which he was captain arrived in the final tie. And he chronicles almost a record by the spare man, Lord Howard de Walden, "who showed very pretty form in an assault with sabres before the Queen of the Hellenes, and won the Craven Stakes at Newmarket in the same week." Much well-earned comment is directed to the fact that the only representatives at Athens who were not financially supported by their own Government were the British representatives—but they did receive £50 from the Greek Government. That seems a matter which might be put right.

Suggestions are made for the precautions that should be taken if we wish to win the Marathon race at Athens. Above all, that the British competitors should be housed on board a vessel in Phalerum Bay, and that, among other measures, a trained attendant should be on board who could massage and bandage and tend the physical wants of athletes.

The journey from Naples to Athens and back to Venice contains much pretty descriptive writing, but again marred by too many architectural technical terms. When the yacht was reached at Naples the eruption of Vesuvius was just over, and the unusual event is recounted of a priest who, seeing the lava come in through a window crevice, fled in panic and left his flock, of whom about 200 perished in the church. The King of Italy banished the faithless shepherd, and the Vatican approved the action of the Quirinal, the Pope saying he would have done the same as the King. The voyage gives scope for much reflection on Homeric navigation and astronomy, which is interesting; but we rather wish that Mr. Cook would not use the word *Thalassocracy* for *supremacy at sea*. It takes a little bit of *digging out* for the ordinary reader. Only a very small section of the book is devoted to the attractive part which we have so far reviewed. The remainder is severely technical. We read of the preparations made and rules laid down for the London meeting of 1908, and there is a full return of the results. Whereas at Athens no British team was found to represent the country at our real national game, football, the results of the London meeting has decided the Central Committee to rule out *Rugby Union*, as well as certain other competitions, such as racquets—ground on which it is difficult for all nationalities to compete. The Olympic Games are for amateurs only, and many pages are devoted to the amateur definition. Standardisation and an international jury are discussed, with the conclusion that the judging must be undertaken by the country where the games are held.

The next official Olympic Games are to be held in Stockholm in 1912, and they will begin probably at about the end of June—a just tribute to the Northern sportsmen, who have led the way to the last conception of a true embodiment of physical training. But there will be games at Athens again this year. Such was the decision of the International Council held in Berlin last year, where a sub-committee of three was appointed to gather the opinions of Europe, the United States, and the rest of the sporting world, and to report progress at the next International Council, which is to meet at Budapest. Mr. Cook is one of the chosen three. His influence should be of the utmost service, judging from the experience which he declares that he has gathered from a long connection with international sport, that "only by independence and stability can we attain any permanent or beneficial results, and that continuity of policy will be our surest weapon in the end." And Mr. Cook bases the Olympic ideal "partly on the love of fair play which is the essence both of mediæval and of modern chivalry, partly on that cultivation of what is beautiful and of good report, which is the basis of classical as of Christian civilisation." There are 175 pages of appendices, with statistics of the Olympic Games already held, and with voluminous rules of sport in all its phases. It is a book which should find a place in the library of every club that is sufficiently representative to have an interest in international sport, and in others more modest it would not be out of place. There are many beautiful and interesting illustrations.



## OUR DANISH ANCESTORS

*The Danes in Lancashire.* By S. W. PARTINGTON. (Sherratt and Hughes: 5s. net.)

ACCORDING to Mr. Partington, who writes for the enlightenment of the general reader, Anglo-Saxon England was not, in a popular sense, a land of freedom. He does not hold with Green, the historian, that English settlers were communities of free men. They were known as bondmen, villains, bordars, cottars, and serfs, and it was not until the advent of the hardy Northmen that England learned what it was to be actually free. Thus, the sochmanni and the "liber tenentes," who held land exempt from villain services, were only to be found in Danish settlements. These settlements, moreover, were separate or distinct from the English settlements, and are known, to this day, by their Danish names. Besides instituting improved methods of agriculture, the Danes also introduced the science of shipbuilding, and it is probably to them that we owe our maritime supremacy. Indeed, from the facts submitted to us in this work, the effect of the Danish invasion was as beneficial to the Anglo-Saxon as the Roman invasion was to the early Briton. Lancashire appears to have been the area from whence Danish influence radiated. Their mighty efforts to establish themselves in the South having been thwarted by Aelfred and Aethelred, they, after much wandering, found peace and security at Chester. This place they fortified, and it became the basis of operations which led to the occupancy of the country north of the Dee. It was evidently in this region that the famous battle of Brunanburh took place, and, considering the amount of controversy which this engagement has raised, Mr. Partington's own theory of it is a matter for singular interest. Grose, in his "Antiquities," quotes Brombridge or Brinkburn as being the locality of Anlaf's defeat. Camden gives Brunford, near Brumbridge in Northumberland. Gibson thinks the battle must have taken place somewhere near the Humber. Others have suggested Brumborough in Cheshire, Banbury in Oxfordshire, Burnham and Bourne in Lincolnshire, Brunton in Northumberland, and Brownedge in Lancashire. All the above, however, appear to be, more or less, guesses. Mr. Partington, on the other hand, makes quite an analysis of the subject. The importance of first establishing the site of the "burh" or hill raises the question of where the "tun" or village on the Brun was situated. This, from the customs then in vogue of "settling near a burh," for the protection afforded by an overlord who occupied it, and of establishing a feldekirk by setting up a cross near the hamlet, where they used to preach Christianity and bury their dead, would probably be disclosed by the sacred site or God's Lea which gave its name to the "burh" or hill. In this way we should get Brun-ley, Bron-ley, and Burn-ley. Doomsday Book, however, does not record such a place as Burnley, but, as the cross stood at the foot of the "burh" near the Brun, the author considers the early name would have been Brunford. But whether this is to be actually relied upon or not, Mr. Partington certainly gives excellent reasons for claiming Burnley as the site of the great contest. Assuming Warcock Hill, on the long causeway of the Pennine range, to be the first position taken by Anlaf's army, the means of his juncture with his Welsh allies was the road to Sheffield and Castercliffe. From here, by a road running due west to the Broadbank, the camp site at Haggate was reached, from which centre, the author surmises, Anlaf sent the Welshmen under Adalis, and his shipmen under Hryngri, to repel the advancing Saxons as they were crossing the Brunford under cover of the darkness. Two days afterwards Anlaf took possession of the hill near Mereclough, afterwards called High Law. The pastures behind this hill are still known as the Battlefield, and there is a stone called the Battelstone in the centre of it. Constantine and the Scots, Mr. Partington further states, were in charge of the hill, and the Pict and Orkney men behind. His centre he pushed forward at Brownedge, to the "Sun of Wrst," while his right touched St. Winden Water under Adalis with the Welsh and shipmen. The Saxons,

under Athelstan, had their encampment somewhere on the plain called Bishop's House Estate. From the further interesting details dealing with this famous conflict, one is almost forced to the acceptance of the author's declaration which says "if the Saxon description of the battle in Turner's 'History of the Anglo-Saxons' be read and compared with the Ordnance maps before named, the reader will see that there is no other place in England which can show the same circumstantial evidence, nor any place, having that evidence, be other than the place sought for." Curiously enough, Mr. McClure, in his recent work on "British Place-Names," suggests even another site for this momentous fight, which, as he himself states, has given rise to more disputes than any other event in our history. He, like Mr. Partington, recognises the importance of looking for some locality which would serve as a meeting-place for Athelstan's opponents, and, from its facilities for transit along the Roman roads, places Bromfield in Cumberland as the scene of the battle. This place would indeed support the critics who favour a west country landing-place for Anlaf, but, as we have seen, Mr. Partington's explanations dispose of the difficulties which Florence of Worcester's statement, that Anlaf's fleet entered the mouth of the Humber, raises. From plain evidence of the details of the battle, it really looks as if Mr. Partington had at last discovered the actual site, and should this prove to be the case, his book must gain no small amount of importance as a work of historical interest. As it is, there are other portions of it, dealing with such interesting subjects as Place-Names, Patronymics, Physical Types, Husbandry, Stone Crosses, Runes, etc., which, in a general way, may be said to be highly instructive.

## LEONARDO DA VINCI

*Leonardo da Vinci's Note-books.* By EDWARD McCURDY. (Duckworth. 5s.)

THE note-books of the "most richly gifted by Nature of all the sons given," the man whose genius has the best right to be called universal of any that have ever lived, could not fail, in any form, to be of interest, but Mr. McCurdy has added to their general interest by judicious selection and arrangement. Leonardo was known in his own day as the most accomplished painter of his generation, as sculptor, architect, and musician, as mechanician and engineer, as anatomist and botanist, as geologist and geographer—indeed, as one who had taken the large fields of art and science to be his province. It is small wonder that a legend has gathered round his name during his life, and that he stands out to after-times in the character of a great if only half-effectual magician, one pre-eminent less by performance than by power, the "Italian brother of Faust." But this wonderful and capricious prodigy by his gossiping biographers, the man who fitted a lizard with horns and artificial eyes, who invented oscillating wings filled with quicksilver, and mechanical birds, becomes in the light of modern research a creature of even more varied and astonishing gifts. His greatness as an artist suffers no diminution, but the sustained energy of his mind is revealed, and the continuous and ordered effort which was the concomitant of the achievement of his life. He laboured to know before creating. This habit of scientific investigation diverted him gradually from the practice of art to the study of its laws, and thence to the study of the laws of nature. His scientific position is briefly touched upon by Mr. McCurdy, who draws attention to Leonardo's anticipation of modern scientific methods in his deductions from the fact that fossil shells are found in the higher mountain ridges of Lombardy. In science, however, for the most part he heralded the work of others; his work, as Pater says of the Renaissance of the fifteenth century, was "in many things great rather by what it designed or aspired to do than by what it actually achieved." Mr. McCurdy's object is rather to present Leonardo as a man and a writer, and he has therefore chosen passages of philosophic, artistic, and literary, rather than scientific interest. Leonardo describes his notes—which extend over a period of some forty years—

as a "collection without order," but this rough ore from an inexhaustible mine gives a very complete idea of his mental activity and of certain aspects of his character. The cast of his mind was, it appears, anti-clerical, and his scorn of the trade in miracles and pardons, the "Selling of Paradise," is vigorously expressed in the section of his writings known as the prophecies, and in the brief note that "*Frati santi* spells Pharisees," and "many have made a trade in deceits and feigned miracles, cozening the foolish herd, and if no one showed himself cognisant of their deceits they would impose upon them all." His vehemence may not unnaturally have won him the title of heretic, but his quarrel lay not with the foundations of faith, but with what he conceived to be its degradation in practice. In the conclusion of a passage describing the natural origin of life, he adds: "I speak not against the sacred books, for they are supreme truth."

His powers as a writer, the originality of his outlook, are manifest on every page. To him warfare is a "bestial frenzy," and he seeks to show it stripped of all its pageantry in a passage "the way to represent a battle" which is a triumph of realism, and which possesses an interest and value apart either from this fact or from the mastery in the art of writing which it reveals. "Its ultimate value is moral and didactic. His description is of the identical spirit which has animated the creations of Tolstoi and Verestchagin." There are almost as many trenchant sayings on life and human affairs as on art and natural laws, expressed with a poignant simplicity more forcible than epigrams. "Whoever," he wrote, "in discussion adduces authority uses not his intellect but rather memory." The necessity to use life fully, the vision of death, the end, is repeated in his moral sayings:

"Life well spent is long."

"Thou, O God, dost sell unto us all good things at the price of labour."

"As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so life well used brings happy death."

"I wish to work miracles. I may have fewer possessions than other men who are more tranquil and those who wish to grow rich in a day."

It is in these brief fragments that we catch a glimpse, not of that immense intelligence of his, of that untroubled, agile, and flawlessly operating understanding, but of certain "sweet savours amid the wonderful strength, the strangeness and potency of what he pours forth for us"; *ex forti dulcedo*.

## SHORTER REVIEWS

*According to Maria.* By MRS. JOHN LANE. (John Lane, 6s.)

THE authoress of "*According to Maria*" has a light hand and a taste for social satire. Maria is the soul of a suburb, the spirit of a climber, and there is unfailing vivacity in the portrait of her, from her school-days, when she used to get up at night and "do things with three feathers out of a feather-duster stuck in the back of her head, just as they do them at Court," to the maturer Maria of Bayswater, the patient recipient of snubs from forgetful plutocrats and forgetful princesses. The book gives the evolution of Maria, from Brixton to Bayswater, by way of Clapham and West Kensington; and her aspirations after what is "stylish" (whether Chippendale or new art hot-water cans), her reflections on furniture and friendship, wedding presents, and at-homes, on "choosing a church," the value of etiquette, and the meaning of life have an absurd epical unity. After a difficult and expensive social education, she finds half of her life-wish fulfilled ("I do hope I shall live to know the best people and keep a butler"). She keeps a butler, and her daughter's engagement appears in the *Morning Post*. The whole book is a light and lively denunciation of the aridity of lives like Maria's, the application of a powerful magni-

fying glass to certain forms of middle-class life and aspiration; and Maria ends by being not a human being, but a symbol.

*Althea.* By VERNON LEE. (John Lane. 3s. 6d. net.)

THESE dialogues upon aspirations and duties have not the interest of the disputations in the "*New Republic*," where the characters were thinly veiled studies of real and widely differing human beings. "Taken as a whole," writes the authoress, "the ideas and tendencies distributed among my half-dozen speakers are my own ideas and tendencies, various, shifting, but never really conflicting." The dialogue is, in reality, a diary. The persons of the drama are mere lay-figures; and there is a certain monotony in listening to the unvarying voice of the showman issuing from behind this box of puppets. These conversations, these essays, are too capricious and too invertebrate to be considered as contributions to our ideas upon the use of the soul, the "the social question," and aesthetics. The solemn Baldwin, the "aesthetic pessimist," who made his appearance in a volume of similar dialogues collected some years ago by the authoress, is to be taken as a discarded attitude of hers; while Lady Althea,

"though young, intolerably severe,"

is the expression of the instructive stoicism of a rare type of character. She is Baldwin's pupil; and Baldwin teaches her that "there are certain things called *cause* and *effect*, therefore that certain acts give pain or pleasure, or produce it in the long run; that the world would be rid of so much pain if it could be rid of so many of such acts." Very true, but who doubted it? Yet this trite teaching of Baldwin's is the entire subject of the first of these essays, and reappears, as a *leit motif* in others; and Althea is described as a fortunate sample of what we may perhaps all become, "a nature which knows spontaneously what the rest of us learn by experience and reflection." Description, not discussion, is certainly Vernon Lee's forte; and her vignettes of scenery near Florence and Rome are, in spite of a certain preciousness, the pleasantest portion of the book.

## FICTION

*The Adventures of an A.D.C.* By SHELLAND BRADLEY. (John Lane. 6s.)

GREAT events often spring from petty or mean causes, as young Wynford discovered, when, through the jealous contention of two women, he found himself appointed A.D.C. to a Lieutenant-Governor of an Indian hill station. His arrival at Government House is the commencement of a series of very amusing experiences, which are related by the writer with a real sense of humour. Those readers who have heard about "*The Doings of Berengaria*" will find much enjoyment in the renewal of their acquaintance with this charming representative of the smart set. Interest will also be roused in respect to the youthful A.D.C.'s "Vision."

*A Splendid Heritage.* By MRS. STEPHEN BATSON. (Stanley Paul. 6s.)

"A SPLENDID HERITAGE" appears to have a purpose as well as a plot, which is a disadvantage, from the point of view of the reader. The plot is simple enough—the love story of the millionaire Socialist, Richard Ferrier. Ferrier, after he leaves Oxford, disappears in Naples to study the social question in that city's interesting and unique slums. At first "he loses himself to find himself," and declares he has no vocation for matrimony. But "Dan Cupid's vengeance" is not long delayed; he falls in love with a Mrs. Sherwood, whom he sees twice in the streets of Naples. Now Ferrier does not wish to be accepted for his millions but for his merits, so he takes an eight-roomed cottage at Mrs. Sherwood's lodge-gates, and poses as a



poor man with a paltry six hundred a year. Mrs. Sherwood, who is a "conventional exploded type of woman," whom her best friend compares to a pincushion, resists for some time her feelings for Ferrier; but all ends well in the last chapter. Too much of this otherwise harmless novel is spent in caricature—and crude caricature—of English society and of the "unemployed who spend their days in chasing the ball and their nights in bridge," and in Dick Ferrier's wordy and windy outbursts upon the wickedness of private enterprise, the sins of individualism, the delights of goodwill and Socialism. Quite apart from the merits or demerits of Socialism, these sermons and soliloquies are as dull as propagandist pamphlets, and are an artistic mistake.

*The Gift of St. Anthony.* By CHARLES GRANVILLE. (C. W. Daniel. 6s.)

"THE GIFT OF ST. ANTHONY" is an amazing piece of nonsense. At first sight it appears like a parody upon the opinions of Socialists and Suffragettes, but apparently the author is quite in earnest. The "leading gentleman" is a Russian Socialist "of distinguished parentage," with carefully coiffured black hair and long-shaped pearly teeth. This Count Ivan Dravsky, who possesses "all the dreamy unpractical characteristics of the Russian nobility," lives in romantic exile in Brussels as a teacher of music. His reputation as an instructor of the young is, however, utterly shattered by two *liaisons*, and he determines to migrate to London, the city of forlorn hopes. At a Bayswater boarding-house he meets with a Suffragette, Miss Sowerby, who at once enlists him in "the cause." That "bright brave spirit," "beaming with roguish intelligence," joins in an attack upon Westminster and falls in the *mêlée*, exclaiming pathetically: "Thank God, I shall be the first among the martyrs!" From the day of Miss Sowerby's death a "change comes over the spirit" of Dravsky. He has lost his illusions about British freedom and the British Constitution; so at last, one wintry day in Edinburgh, he distributes his spare cash among a starving crowd of rioters, and—quite gratuitously—shoots himself, quoting Nietzsche to the last. "And the crowd gathered close around the fallen body of the man who had given his all, then died, for a cause." This unmitigated rubbish is written in the language of old-fashioned melodrama. We hear of "quaffing goblets," "devotions to the goddess Nicotine," "imbibing doctrines at a mother's knee," and the like.

## MEETINGS OF SOCIETIES

### PHYSICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

Proceedings at the meeting held March 11, Prof. H. L. Callendar, F.R.S., President, in the chair.

Dr. W. H. Eccles read a paper "On Coherers." A method of investigating detectors is developed with special reference to the relations between the energy given to the detector in the form of electrical vibrations and the energy delivered by the detector, as direct current, to the circuit of the indicating instrument. The stream of energy supplied to the detector was always of the same order as that usual in telegraphy. The detector under examination was placed in a circuit containing suitable inductance and capacity, which was secondary to a primary circuit. The primary could be set into electrical vibration by breaking a known current in it. The coupling was very small, so that when a current of a few milliamperes was broken in the primary, the energy delivered to the detector was of the order a thousandth of an erg, and the electromotive force at the coherer terminals was of the order a tenth of a volt. The response of the detector was measured by comparing the sound in its telephone with the sound produced in the same telephone by interrupting a measurable direct current. A special switch key enabled the comparison to be made quickly. The

power delivered to the detector and to the telephone was determined by extrapolation from measurements on stronger currents with the thermogalvanometer. The results of experiments on coherers made of oxidised iron wire dipping into mercury, and on coherers made of a clean iron point touching an oxidised iron plate, are exhibited as curves connecting: (1) the steadily applied E.M.F. and consequent current through the coherer; (2) the steadily applied E.M.F. and the power given to the telephone, for various rates of delivery of vibration energy to the detector; (3) the power delivered to the detector and the power passed to the telephone, the E.M.F. applied to the coherer being constant. Curves (1) show that in a self-restoring coherer the current increases more and more rapidly as the E.M.F. is raised, till, in general, a point of inflection is reached, and then the current increases more slowly. Curves (2) show the rise and fall of sensitiveness to oscillations as the applied E.M.F. is increased. Curves (3) show that if  $W$  represents the power in watts delivered to the coherer, and  $w$  the power passed to the telephone circuit, then  $w = m(W - a)$  where  $m$  and  $a$  have values settled by the magnitude of the current through the detector. The quantity  $m$  for a good low resistance iron-mercury coherer has been found to be as high as 0.06; while  $a$  is usually near  $1.0 \times 10^{-8}$  watt. These curves show that these coherers are not "voltage-operated" detectors but "integrating" detectors. The author puts forward the hypothesis that the properties of an oxide coherer may arise solely from the temperature variations caused in the minute mass of oxide at the contact by the electrical oscillations and by the applied E.M.F. He examines the hypothesis mathematically, and shows that most of the phenomena recorded in the curves (1), (2), (3) above can in this way be accounted for as perfectly as the present state of the measurements permits.

Mr. W. Duddell expressed his interest in the paper, and remarked that it was important to know how much energy was needed to work a detector in order to calculate the amount which it was necessary to radiate. He asked the author if the action of the coherer he had described might not depend upon compressions due to electrostatic attractions. Prof. C. H. Lees remarked that if the action of the coherer depended upon thermal effects, the sensitiveness would be affected by using materials of different thermal conductivities, whereas if the effects were to be attributed to compressions, change of material would have little effect upon the sensitiveness. Mr. Rayner pointed out that if the effect was due to the temperature co-efficient of the resistance of the film, the sensitiveness should depend upon the temperature at which the coherer was worked. He asked if Dr. Eccles had conducted experiments at different temperatures and if he could give any particulars as to how the sensitiveness of the coherer he had used compared with other types. Dr. Russell suggested that as the thickness of the film of oxide on the iron plate was only about a micron, the electrostatic attraction between the needle and the iron plate would be appreciable even at very low voltages. It was conceivable that, owing to the compression, heat was generated in the film at this point. Mr. Campbell remarked that in accurate work there would be no trouble in measuring the mutual inductances, but the determination of the damping factors would be difficult.

Dr. Eccles, in reply to Mr. Duddell, said that the hypothesis that electrostatic attractions between the two conductors separated by the film of oxide caused the change of conductivity produced by electrical oscillations, was negated by the fact that in such materials as the author had tried the magnitude of the co-efficient of decrease of resistance with temperature and the thermoelectric properties of the two conductors had a great deal to do with the sensitiveness of the detector. In reply to Prof. Lees, no doubt the sensitiveness of a detector would, if the thermal theory were correct, depend upon the slowness with which the heat was conducted away by the metal near the contact. This consideration suggested one reason why some of the badly conducting oxides formed such good detectors. With regard to Mr. Rayner's observations, he

had not attempted experiments at other than normal temperatures. The author, replying to Dr. Russell, said the answer to Mr. Duddell was circumvented by his suggestion that the electrostatic attractions caused compressions which on the whole produced local heating. But it might be pointed out that if in the secondary circuit the capacity was changed to another value and the inductance altered to keep the period of the circuit the same, the oscillating voltage at the coherer was different, yet no difference worth mentioning was heard in the detector. In answer to Mr. Campbell, no doubt the mutual inductance could be measured accurately given proper experimental facilities. Since, however, another course of experiments was adopted, one that did not need an accurate value of the mutual inductance between primary and secondary, this measurement was not attempted accurately.

A paper entitled "Earth-air Electric Currents" was read by Mr. G. C. Simpson. The paper describes a method for automatically recording the electrical current which passes from the earth into the air during periods of fine weather. A large plate (17 metres<sup>2</sup>) was placed in the open as near to the ground as was consistent with efficient insulation, this was then connected to an insulated vessel from which water issued through an orifice surrounded by an earth-connected cylinder. The water as it dropped from the insulated vessel carried away, by the well-known "collector" action, all the charge which the exposed plate received, and the latter remained at zero potential. The charged water drops were collected in a vessel connected to a self-registering electrometer which was earth-connected for an instant at the end of every two minutes. The paper describes the sources of error and the method of determining the value of the earth-air current and of the conductivity of the air from the records of the electrometer. The method was used in Simla (India), but owing to the impossibility of obtaining a site on which the normal electrical field of the atmosphere was undisturbed by the surrounding hills and trees, the absolute values obtained were uncertain, but it is very probable that the daily range of the different factors were near approximations to the truth.

Dr. C. Chree expressed his interest in the paper, and remarked that they had worked at Kew with C. T. R. Wilson's apparatus. It would be interesting to know whether the same results could be obtained from the author's and from Wilson's apparatus. He drew attention to the difficulty of insulating a piece of the earth in England sufficiently well to obtain reliable results. Dr. Russell said that C. T. R. Wilson had found that the mean earth leakage current in his experiments was about  $2.2 \times 10^{-15}$  amperes per square centimetre. It was therefore exceedingly small. Linke had shown from the results obtained in balloon ascents that the atmospheric potential gradient diminished regularly up to a height of 6,000 metres, and probably much higher. Assuming that air has "conductivity," this shows that the conductivity increases as we ascend. It seems reasonable to suppose that at great altitudes, notwithstanding the intense cold, the highly rarefied air is practically a conductor. The earth leakage currents carry charges to these conducting layers, and these charges are continually being returned to the earth by the storms always taking place somewhere or other in the world. The energy expended by the currents was probably due originally to the sun's heat vaporising and raising water to heights in the air. A surprising result obtained by Dr. Simpson was that the sunshine apparently caused a diminution in the conductivity of the air over the surface of the ground. It was customary to suppose that ultra-violet rays improve the conductivity of the atmosphere, and this supposition was certainly a help in explaining how radio-telegraphic waves went further over the ocean by night than by day.

#### LINNEAN SOCIETY OF LONDON.

General meeting, March 17, Dr. D. H. Scott, M.A., F.R.S., President, in the chair.

Mr. J. H. Holland, F.L.S., on behalf of the Director of Kew, showed samples of Soy Bean, *Glycine Soja*, Sieb. and Zucc. (*G. hispida*, Maxim.), with herbarium specimens of the plant producing this seed. He stated that the seeds of "Soy," of which there are many varieties, may be black, brown, green or greenish-yellow, yellow, or mottled; sometimes seeds are described as white, but there appears to be no Soy bean true white in colour. The plant is variously known as "Soy," "Soja," "Soya," "White Gram," "American Coffee Berry," and "China Bean." In China and Japan, where the plant has been cultivated for many years—perhaps centuries—the beans are an important food, and they are also said to be used as a substitute for coffee. Bean cake and the sauce known commercially as "Soy" is also made from them. It is stated that in the manufacture of the Soy of commerce, in addition to the beans, the requirements are simply a large amount of salt and flour, and an unlimited supply of fresh water. Wenchow is an important centre of the manufacture, and here the bean used for the purpose is said to be chiefly the white form from Chinkiang. The cultivation has been extended to India, Africa, and other warm countries, and in America the plant has been grown for a number of years (twenty-five at least) as a forage crop. Like many other leguminous plants, it has a special value as a green manure. The principal use of the beans in this country is for the extraction of the oil, of which they contain about 18 per cent. suitable for soap-making, and in general as a substitute for cotton-seed oil. The residue, after the extraction of oil, is suitable for feeding cattle, and for this purpose appears likely to become a serious competitor of cotton-seed cakes, sunflower-seed cakes, linseed cakes, etc. The beans can be bought in London at about £5 to £6 per ton; the oil realises about £21 to £22 per ton, and the cake about £6 to £7 per ton. Beans and bean-cake exported from China have gone chiefly to Japan and certain parts of Asia, but recently, beginning about November, 1908, an important trade has been developed in them, more especially with the beans, between Manchuria and Europe, Dairen (Dalny) being the chief place of export. The cause of this sudden development may, perhaps, be attributed to the facts that a great increase in the cultivation took place in Manchuria during the Russo-Japanese war to meet the demands for food of the Russian Army; then, when the troops were withdrawn, the production being found profitable, and the home demand reduced, other markets were sought. The trade extended to Japan, and afterwards, assisted perhaps by a period of depression in that country, it extended to Europe, where the industry has created interest in many quarters. The amount of the 1908 crop sent to Europe through Vladivostok up to July, 1909, was 180,000 tons, the greater part destined for the English market (Hull and Liverpool), and the remainder going to German (Hamburg) and Scandinavian ports. Up to 1907 the export of Soy beans from Manchuria did not exceed 120,000 tons annually. During 1908 the export rose to 330,000 tons (one half shipped from Dairen; 100,000 tons from Newchang, and 65,000 tons by rail *via* Suifenhö to Vladivostok), the increase it is said being due entirely to the demand from Europe. The total of the 1909 crop exported has been estimated at about 700,000 to 800,000 tons. It is anticipated that at present prices Europe may eventually take at least 1,000,000 tons annually.

The following is an abstract of a paper by Mr. E. P. Stebbing, F.L.S., "On the Life-History of *Chermes himalayensis* on the Spruce (*Picea Morinda*) and Silver Fir (*Abies Webbiana*) of the N.W. Himalaya." The life-histories of the European species of *Chermes*, *C. abietis*, and *C. viridis*, have been studied by Blochmann and L. Dreyfus in Germany, Cholodkovsky in Russia, and more recently by E. R. Burdon, of Cambridge. It is now well known that *C. viridis* has alternating series of generations upon the spruce and larch. The discovery that a species of *Chermes* formed galls on the spruce in the Himalaya was first reported by A. Smythies, of the Indian Foreign Service, in 1892. These were considered by the late Mr. Buckton to be *Chermes abietis*. Investigations commenced



by the author in May, 1901, and carried on intermittently up to July, 1909, have led to the discovery that this *Chermes*, although an undescribed species, has a life-history somewhat similar to the European species of the genus, having series of agamic generations alternating between the spruce and silver fir (which grow together in mixture in the Western Himalaya), with a sexual generation occurring but once a year, in the autumn, on the spruce. The paper shows that the Himalayan insect passes through similar generations to its European congeners to which the names *Fundatrices*, *Alatæ*, *Colonici*, *Sexuparæ*, and *Sexuales* have already been given by European investigators. The periods at which these generations are to be found upon the trees in the Himalaya differ considerably, however, from the European ones, and are apparently chiefly governed by the appearance of the monsoon early in July in this region. So greatly is the life-history apparently dependent upon the climatic conditions of the locality that further close investigations are required to establish definitely the period of appearance of the sexual generation. Coming to the question of the damage committed by the insect in the forest, the paper points out that this is undoubtedly of a serious nature. In the case of the spruce, young trees are often seen loaded with galls, as many as 80 per cent. of the branches bearing, at times, several cones apiece upon them. Each gall means the destruction of a bud or future branch. In the silver fir also, the growth of young trees is seemingly impeded, owing to the method of feeding of the second generation of the *Colonici* (the *Exules* and *Sexuparæ*). This results in a curious twisting and contortion of the upper portions of the new shoots, the needles on the upper half twisting round one another tightly, forming a loose kind of gall-like structure, which subsequently withers and drops off. As many as 90 per cent. of the new shoots of young trees have been observed to be corkscrewed and killed in this manner.

#### ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

Abstract of proceedings, March 15 E. T. Newton, Esq., F.R.S., in the chair.

Mr. Oldfield Thomas, F.R.S., F.Z.S., exhibited the skin of a new *Potto* from British East Africa, which was proposed to be called *PERODICTICUS IBEANUS*, sp. n. Fur very thick and soft. Colour of upper surface grizzled hoary grey, except the shoulders and fore-back, which were blackish. Teeth comparatively small. Head and body, 339 mm.; tail, 68; skull, 64. *Hab.*: Kakamega Forest, British East Africa. *Type*: Male. B.M. no. 10.3.18.1. Presented by Messrs. Matison and Brett.

Mr. T. Goodey, M.Sc.(Birm.), introduced by the Secretary, gave an account of his Memoir entitled "A Contribution to the Skeletal Anatomy of the Fish *Chlamydoselachus anguineus*, Gar." The author dealt with the anatomy of the axial and appendicular skeleton, paying particular attention to the structure of the notochord. He stated that the notochord in this fish had generally been regarded as unstricted except at the extreme anterior extremity, but that he had ascertained the presence of well-developed, calcified cyclospindyllic centra at the anterior end of the column and of calcified cyclospindyllic centra of two sizes in the main caudal region.

Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant, F.Z.S., read a paper entitled "Additional Notes on the Birds of Hainan," based on a small collection of Hainan birds recently forwarded to the Zoological Society by Mr. Robert Douglas, of Shanghai, and, at the suggestion of Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, F.R.S., presented to the Natural History Museum. The collection contained several species of great interest, and the two following were described as new:—

*TEPERODORNIS HAINANUS*, sp. n.—*Adult male*: Differs from Indian examples of *T. pelvius* Hodg. in having the mantle and back much darker and of a reddish-brown colour. *Adult female*: Darker and browner above than the female of *T. pelvius* Hodg. *Hab.*: Seven-Finger Mountains.

*PITTA DOUGLASSI*, sp. n.—*Adult male*: Most nearly allied to *P. soror*, Wardlaw Ramsay, from Cochin China, which it resembles in having the crown and occiput dull bluish-green like the back, lower back and rump bluish; the fore part of the head, cheeks, ear-coverts, and lower part of the throat dull pink, chin inclining to whitish, lores, feathers surrounding the eye and on either side of the occiput rust-red; chest very similar but tinged with pink; breast and rest of underparts buff; lower part of the abdomen whitish, upper wing-coverts and scapulars greenish-blue like the mantle; quills brown, margined on the outer web, especially towards the extremity, with pale brownish-buff, the five outer primaries white at the base of the inner web; tail greenish-blue like the back. Total length ca. 8.0 inches; wing 4.45; tail 2.05; tarsus 2.0. *Adult female*: Differs from the male in being less brightly coloured; the top of the head, occiput, and nape being olive-brown suffused with pink, and the rest of the upperparts, including the wing-coverts and scapulars, mostly dull olive-green; the chest buff (instead of rust-red) tinged with pink, and the rest of the underparts paler buff. Total length ca. 7.6 inches; wing 4.4; tail 1.9; tarsus 1.8. *Hab.*: Seven-Finger Mountains.

Among the rarities attention was called to the remarkable Magpie (*Temnurus niger*) with its curious truncate tail-feathers, the beautiful Green Jay (*Cissa katsumata*) recently described by the Hon. Walter Rothschild, F.Z.S., and a Bulbul (*Pycnonotus sinensis*) not hitherto recorded from the island.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—I am glad to see the line you are taking in THE ACADEMY as to the House of Lords. In the rural districts the Lords and their House are popular with all classes. The same may be said of provincial towns, if the political Nonconformists are excepted, and in these days nearly all Nonconformists are advanced Radicals. The Lords are popular with the farmers and yeomen, large or small, and the labourers. We had an instance of this the other day at a village in this neighbourhood. A lady, a member of the Women's Imperial League, was addressing a meeting of villagers, agricultural labourers for the most part. In the course of her remarks she alluded to the Veto, but the Veto conveyed nothing to their minds. On its being explained that the Veto meant the destruction of the House of Lords, there was a loudly expressed chorus of dissent. This being so, that the Lords are popular with large sections of the community, it would be a mistake for their defenders to adopt a too apologetic tone.

No doubt the Lords have more than once adumbrated the real and final judgment of the country as expressed at the polls in a remarkable manner, but we want an Upper Chamber for those occasions when the Commons might persist in a wrong judgment. In countries with a written constitution no legislation is valid which is opposed to the constitution of the country, and the decision as to whether a proposed law is against the constitution rests not with legislature, but with the judges of the Supreme Court, an independent body. The security which a written constitution gives, in countries which do not possess one, can alone be found in an Upper Chamber founded, if not entirely, on the hereditary principle. It is impossible to exaggerate the gravity of the situation.

PERCY WYNDHAM.

Clouds, East Knoyle, Salisbury.

March 28, 1910.

### LORDS v. COMMONS.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—All thoughtful people must agree with you that the House of Lords have made an unworthy exhibition of themselves in meeting the Commons half-way in their revolutionary schemes. The peers seem to forget that they have as much right to exist—are as important and integral a part of the British Constitution—as the Commons (and this in addition to being usually a great deal wiser and more statesmanlike).

Most people whose opinion is worth asking will also admit that the House of Commons stands far more urgently in need of reform than the House of Lords.

Taking these propositions for granted, why, then, did not the Lords exercise their undoubted right of passing a series of Resolutions for the reform of the Commons, and send them down to that House simultaneously with the grotesque Commons Resolutions being sent up to the Lords? It seems to me this course would have reduced the matter to a more extreme absurdity than even Mr. Asquith was able to do in his speech.

W. M. COOPER.

P.S.—The time will come when we shall all be grateful to the seventeen stalwarts who stuck to their guns against the third Rosebery Resolution.

### "THE CONQUEST OF LIFE."

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—Having read the article entitled "In Sound of the Sea" contained in your issue of March 19 with much interest, I should like to draw your attention to the work of a new German naturalist justly famous on the Continent—Wilhelm Bölsche. Your contributor in his composition so greatly reminded me of the above-mentioned author's style that I cannot refrain from making a few remarks concerning him.

Despite our carping critics, a new constellation occasionally does arise upon the heavily starred firmament of literature with silvery glowing and a spheric music that rejoices the old zones of heaven and floats down in sweet symphonies unto the eager ears of men, and to me and many others a lovely lustre such as this beams from the work of Wilhelm Bölsche. His strange, almost uncanny, insight and understanding of Nature and the complex workings of her mind whereunto all our social systems and methods of life are as enslaved vassals doing her divinest will, empower him to cause others to see her as she is, and he is able to dissect and expound her motives with the same sympathy and reverential yet scientific treatment wherewith Winckelmann unfolded the intricacies of ancient Hellas to a world wherein the light of Hedonism was expiring in the bushel of a Puritan age. And let me express the hope that, as Winckelmann undoubtedly fostered the genius of sublime Wagner's mightiest rival spirit—Goethe—this newer albeit humbler German, Wilhelm Bölsche, will assist in encouraging some modern magician of poesy. For there is no doubt that the man of our century, despite all the mathematics and mechanisms he invents with that inexplicably human and inverse love for contrast which the immortal Lewis Carroll would have termed "contrarie-wise," is ever striving to go back and drink at the deep immemorial fountains of Nature. And before the nature-seeker stretches the widest field of research in all the universe; and though the great riddles of her will ever be too impossible and occult to unravel, her simpler meanings afford us deep delight in the guessing, for up till now men have only feared her. The Greeks feared her, and formed their gods to materialise this terror, their Demeter, their Persephone, their Zeus, who overwhelmed the world with lightning and thunder, black hail and rain, their fearful giant lying chained beneath volcanic Ætna, their raging sea-gods and blustering wind-deities. But we, whose advanced Theism and research have made us grow bolder in approaching her, have produced a new school of writers who have explained many of her intimate affairs. These have expelled the griffin, the unicorn, and the phoenix who throned triumphant in the natural history books of Good Queen Bess's reign; they have taught us moral lessons from the true life histories of bees and ants that all the fables of Æsop, Florian, La Fontaine, Kriloff, Lessing and Gellert combined could not outvie, and we have had a fictionist whose "Jungle Book" was assuredly a charming and original venture. The very topical history of the stage reveals this yearning attempt to return to the land in Maeterlinck's "Blue Bird" and the "Chantecler" of Rostand. Not that I am mentioning these two productions from any personal admiration for them, but simply because they convince me of the existence of this nature-longing by their actual appearance. And now, though I am well aware that 'tis a divergence on my part to do so, I must comment for a minute on the widely discussed subject of "Chantecler," whose influence as far as the fashions are concerned is absolutely demoralising. Only the other night I saw, in a West End restaurant, a woman in a white hen hat with a red comb. The dear, ridiculous hen-creation was nestling fondly upon her sister female's straw-coloured hair, and, in my opinion, merely an egg-shaped hat-pin was missing to complete the idyll. But, concerning the play "Chantecler" itself, I want to say that, despite its Aristophanesian satire, it is a bit of a farce, a sort of parade of a feathered Balaam's ass, and, if a lesser mortal than Rostand had attempted it, the critics would have behaved like a livery

old martinet after too much lobster-salad. Of course, the cock's salute to the ascending sun is a very poetical subject, but it was already recognised as such by the early Scandinavians, who enshrined the idea in their mythology. They believed one huge golden cock crowed in Walhalla, at the feet of the chief god Odin to awaken the heroes at sunrise; whilst again, in the underworld of Hades, a black and red-combed cock cockericoosed mournfully. These cocks, according to the Norse commentators, were supposed to watch o'er all the spheres and await the dawning of great Ragnarök, the Day of Judgment. In the "Edda" this finely conceived, may I say, infinitely more appealing, idea than the ruling Juvenalian one of "Chantecler," is beautifully mentioned in my favourite piece, "The Prophecy of Wala," which is the oracular Norn-like song of the mysterious dead seer Wala, who has sat sleeping at the roots of the vast Druid world-tree, Yggdrasil, for many thousand years. She chants:

"There sings with him in the song-forest the flame red cock as Bergar known.

But with the gods great Golden Comb sings; he wakens the heroes in All Fathers hall; yet also another sings under the earth,

A red and black cock in Hella's house."

The above roughly translated extract is from the antique *Völuspá* Saga in the "Edda"; and, lastly, the more modern Swedish poet Tegnér also refers to the superstition above expounded in the twenty-fourth chapter of his epic, the famous *Frithiofs-Saga*. But now I have shown that a portion of the cock story of "Chantecler" is only a very old cock-and-bull story after all, I will resume the chief topic of my epistle—namely, Wilhelm Bölsche.

All the nature-lovers I have spoken about at present are only fictitious exponents of their mistress, and it is left to pioneers like Bölsche, with a refined, imaginative, yet strictly accurate mental power of analysis, to make truth more entrancing than fiction, to crack the fine poetical kernel from the hard nutshell of material fact, and to thus contribute works of infinite value to the useful literature of the day. Bölsche has the touch of a scientific Flaubert, and his volumes are full of exquisite passages. He is what Camille Flammarion, in another department of knowledge, might have been, if he were ten times more impressionable and less apt to permit his theories to run away with him. Bölsche's greatest books are four in number—namely, "Die Abstammung des Menschen" ("The Descent of Man"), "Der Stammbaum der Tiere" ("The Pedigree of Animals"), "Der Steinkohlenwald" ("The Coal Forest"), and "Der Sieg des Lebens" ("The Conquest of Life"). And it is with this last-named tome, although it may not teach so much as the others, I desire to deal with here, on account of its delicate and impressive treatment. Bölsche, as I found in a catalogue of foreign classics, has edited several editions of famous German poets, and poetry has undoubtedly stolen into his "Conquest of Life."

This describes with unerring accuracy the origin of life, rising up and up victoriously from the one-celled protoplasm of the ocean to that most intelligent of mammals—Man. It is impossible for me to picture how well Bölsche handles this fascinating subject, but I will briefly translate one or two passages from his concise volume, and hope they will speak sufficiently for one who is "no orator as Brutus is." He begins it with a characteristic and reflective paragraph:

"It was in that eternally memorable night ere the discovery of America. Sleepless, so we learn, Columbus stood on board his ship and gazed out into the darkness. Did only the inscrutable Egyptian gloom, only the everlasting barren sea lie before him, which he had now sailed through so endlessly, or lay therein—a new and unknown land? Then, suddenly, a little red light appeared; moving mysteriously. It was a firebrand, which a Red Indian brandished aloft. For in the veils of night, out yonder, dreamed truly, although as yet unseen, the isle of San Salvador, the firstling coast of the New World. When morning dawned, the cannons would greet it, its palms would wave: it was discovered. But in this night all was as yet hidden in the one small crimson spark, this tiny, earth-born star. And we imagine, how in that ghostly hour, emblemised by the little red star of San Salvador, brooded the whole titanic continent of America, with its snow-covered craters, its tremendous streams, its wild, unexplored primeval forests, its trackless green prairies—all, all enlocked together for a moment to the watching eye of European culture in the tiny, astral point of a star."

And here is a grotesque, goblin-and-gnome-suggesting description of the land-lobsters on torrid shores feeding on cocoanuts: "But when the short twilight of the tropics has ended the day in this palm jungle, when only the mysterious globe of zodiacal light rests shimmering over the bier of the sunken sun, and when the starry outlines of the Southern Cross com-



mence to flicker mildly on the high, dim firmament, then, wonderful, dwarfish folk creep from their holes amid the gnarled and twisted root-coils of the trees. Like immense spiders, they come, crawling and creeping, and battling viciously for the fallen cocoanuts. But they are not spiders at all. They are lobsters. They run shamelessly over the sands. Now one has gained a cocoanut. But what good shall it do him, this armour-clad nut, which resists all the waters of the world, floating lightly through them in its web of fibres? But the most ingenious toil begins. As human hands peel an orange, so the great front claws of the lobster draw off the fibrous mantle of the nut, surely and scientifically, from the basis onward. Then the same heavy scissors is used as a hammer. But it only hammers on one certain spot of the nut-basis: one of the so-called 'eyes' or seed-holes. If the hard shell at last gives way, then the lobster turns over, dips with one of his hinder and thinner claws into the hole, and blissfully drags out the soft, fruity meat of the nut-kernel bit by bit. The moon rises in its golden splendour and illumines the scene. Cocoanut-eating lobsters on land! . . .

In another part of the volume, Bölsche describes the formation of stalactites by the ageless and ceaseless, slow dropping of rain on lime, by what I consider to be really the finest thing in the book, although it only consists of a single phrase. He writes:—"Dost thou hear the soft downfalling of raindrops from these stalactites? That is the ticking clock of the millenniums."

I have rarely heard a better definition of these marvellous cavern formations, which, according to Clodd and all other scientists, take hundreds of thousands of years to create. If space were not so limited, I would translate Bölsche's superb portrayal of the first cave-dweller, but as it is, I must content myself with reproducing his concluding sentences to "The Conquest of Life."

"What are the stars? What is the All? When Man inquired thus, then Life had played its trump. Entangled by wicked dangers, between the dragon of the glacial period and Typhoon, the evil desert-god, it had evolved a being that struggled for harmony with the iron rules of Cosmos, for the first time. And it strove afterwards, whilst it laid its dominant hand upon the whole earth, to find solutions to the technical problems under which all living creatures beneath it had wrestled in despair for millenniums gone by. Man, in his perfect acclimatisation to the earth-mother, lord of his planet in his mechanisms, already wandering through the entire stellar system and daring all its harsh laws in his glorious mind—has not Life with this creature wrested another victory from death and destruction o'er the coming cycles, over burning wastes and icy ages, dying suns and sinking planet-zones? Will Life not have won when into the inconceivable stretches of time a third factor reinforces the thought and the great yearning: the deed?"

"Now the kiss of the rising sun rests on the stony statue yonder, looming out above the desert. It is the old Memnon-idol, which, as the legend went, sings when the sun caresses it. The Conquest of Life also is only such a faint thrilling of a hidden string, whereon a sun has played for aeons. We do not see the sun. It lies deep below our horizon. But we can hear how this sound rises, how it grows ever mightier and mightier, how it eternally finds higher melodies, instead of the string bursting asunder. The sea-star in his ocean-deeps is such a sound. We are one. Our yearning is one. A sound casts the first cell upon the plan of Life. Another embraces the earth. Another quivers out into the world of stars. It must be a marvellous sun, after all. . . ."

Perhaps morbid people will call Bölsche too optimistic, but most of us admit that it is always pleasant to meet an optimist nowadays. That is where the appeal of Browning and Emerson comes in, and even melancholy Mrs. Humphry Ward's "Robert Elsmere" has an optimist to play the title-rôle. There is a little modern moral fable on the matter now current in Germany which capitalises it:—"Two frogs fell into a bowl of milk. The one was a pessimist and the other an optimist. The pessimist sank limply into the milky pool and perished miserably, but the optimist fought vigorously for the breath of his life. He wriggled about till some cream formed around him at his vigorous churning, and this at length enabled him to float up to the edge of the bowl and clamber out to safety." But this is neither here nor there, and as long as I have established Bölsche's claim upon the attention of your readers, even by the few trifling extracts I am able to give from his treasures, I shall be satisfied to believe that the object of my letter, to bring a new voice in literature to more general notice in England, is achieved and fulfilled.

Ere I conclude, however, I just wish to add a word or two concerning a certain defence of Walt Whitman against my own attack on him, which Miss Ethel Talbot contributed to these columns some weeks ago (Jan. 22). I am well aware that it is rather late in the day to do so now, but I waited for an oppor-

tunity to comment upon her burning and enthusiastic effusion, as I have solely a few random remarks to make. It may be remembered that I denounced Whitman's poem (?), "Out in the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," which commences poorly, and acts up to its poverty-stricken beginning to the very end, whereupon Miss Talbot valiantly endeavoured to quash my opinion in the next issue of THE ACADEMY by declaring: "It only needs that one with the full voice of a man, rich with deep and changing music, should stand unseen in the half-darkness, to read 'Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking'; his listeners may be assured, for ever after, of preserving the perfect picture of the lonely waste of the sea, with the child alone on the shore, and the one crying bird that lost its mate and sorrowed therefore. A poignant picture in rugged rhythms, full of a haunting beauty, a wistfulness, a very subtle charm."

Now, I should like to remind Miss Talbot that, in this case, 'twould not be the poetry but the invisible gentleman with the full rich voice reciting Whitman's fearful fiasco in a choir-like and church-chant manner I trust for the sake of literature, that such a deluded creature may never be found in his shameless lunacy who would effect the charm. There are many things which are intolerable when read in clear, calm, unvarnished print that sound like epics when recited well. As soon as one art comes into contact with another, the better interpreted art of the two will invariably cast a reflected glory upon the inferior product, and in some cases even cover up all its blemishes. Thus I have heard the poems of a modern minor bard, who shall be nameless here, but whose work I personally did not care for and THE ACADEMY slated, recited at a dinner-party at which the author was present by a famous actor in so striking a way that, if I had not happened to have read it previously in cold blood, I would have been tricked into hailing its singer as a reincarnation of Swinburne. Once more, I was the unfortunate listener, at the inauguration of a society, to a declamation of Shelley's incomparable "Skylark" as delivered by a hirsute Apollo with painfully tremulous knees, and I nearly thought Shelley a most disreputable rhymester! When the arts combine, they should run like a pair of horses in harness, or they will overturn the carriage. But great poetry should be witching without requiring men with full, rich voices, and, although they may enhance it, one should be able to read it in the quiet of one's chamber and still be fired; it should not cry aloud for incense and organ music; it should be supreme in its solitude and solitary in its supremacy. Goethe desired his "Erl King" to be read aloud by the light of a candle in a semi-darkened chamber, but we are not compelled to have recourse to such scenic effects to feel the full force and eeriness of his poem.

And, though I may seem like Rienzi in his oration, who begins "I come not here to talk," and promptly continues to contradict himself for an hour or so, I should like to renew my old friendship with my Tennysonian acquaintance, Mr. Henry David Clark, for a moment. Perhaps you may recall that Mr. Clark took the remark I made in my article on Heine (Feb. 5) concerning "the grand studied simplicity" of the poet's language, which "as Goldsmith's celebrated 'Vicar of Wakefield,' discards the stolen elegances of haughty Latin for sweeter, plainer Saxon, ringing truer than a golden coin thrown down," so bitterly to heart that he wrote a lengthy letter about it, comparing the Latin beauties of Thomas Hardy's prose with the Saxon ones of Goldsmith's to the latter's dire decline and downfall. Mr. Clark evidently laboured under the misapprehension that I do not appreciate the proud "haughtiness" of Latin, but I certainly did not intend my words to be accepted in that sense at all. I am exceedingly fond of heavy, rich, rare and scented language, but I merely wished to show how wisely Heine acted in setting his fragrant ideas into simple verbiage, as the former so greatly consisted of lyrics, folk-tales, and short ballads. And, as the lyric requires all the rhythm and flow of music, the folk-tale should have a sweet, quaint nursery-rhyme suggestion about it, and the ballad in its original form is a rhymed story of the people, I still adhere to my opinion by saying that Heine did well in keeping most foreign and erotic language from his song.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

#### THE LOGICAL CLIMAX OF THE "MODERNITY" MOVEMENTS!

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—The delightful hoax played on the Hanging Committee of the Artistes Indépendants at the Paris Salon is very instructive as the logical climax of the anarchism in art which I have fought against almost single-handed for so long. That some wags should have produced an "Impression" by the wagging of a donkey's tail with a brush attached to it is plausible enough. The donkey was backed against a canvas, the brush dipped in

various colours, and the four-footed "artist" of the very latest school of "Excessivism" was irritated into whisking his tail in angry protest. The Impressionist masterpiece thus produced was framed, signed J. R. Boronali—the anagram of Aliboron—labelled "A Sunset on the Adriatic," and hung in the Salon des Indépendants. That these journalistic wags should have taken the precaution to have the whole business attested by a huissier, and have had J. R. Boronali, A.S.S., and his work photographed, makes it the more to be regretted that the hoax was so soon disclosed. What a chance our Modernity-loving critics would have had to distinguish themselves; how they might have hailed the rise of the very newest Impressionism that should shame the Academy into closing its doors, and place the symbol, A.S.S., heavens-high above the mere R.A.! What a scramble there might have been between the International Society and the N.E.A.C. for the honour of exhibiting this masterpiece. Surely A.U., D.S.M.C. and G.M. would have left their lairs to start the very Newest Criticism, and begin another dreadnought attack on the R.A. and the Chantrey! What a time we should have had.

But there is a very serious, not to say a tragic, side to this business. The utter subversion of art ideals, the inversion of all criteria, the sheer anarchism revealed by the hanging in the Salon of this masterpiece of donkey's tail waggery as a work of art, by "artists" who claim to be advanced, is tragic, because it is only the extreme form of what has been going on among the Newists in our midst. A very large section of our Press has vigorously supported this Nihilism. We have seen the most Conservative journals proudly marching in the rear of the Victor Graysons of art criticism. We have seen such anarchists appointed Professors at the Universities which should be the very bulwarks of civilisation and culture; and this under the will of a grand philanthropist who left money to promote excellence in Fine Art. We have seen these Modernity-loving critics, in the interests of their own narrow societies and sectional interests, steadily denounce all that was best in our art until it became a fashion to do so, and we have seen our National Art depreciated in the eyes of the world and reduced in monetary value by millions of pounds, the aims of our artists unsettled, and many of them thrown into dire distress. The authors of this scandalous state of things, the Little Bethelites, instead of being justly ostracised, have been honoured by being placed in charge of public galleries, in which the very first qualification for the posts should be broad-minded fairness, and catholicity of taste.

If W. S. Gilbert had taken to tragedy, could he have conceived any situation of such grim irony as this?

E. WAKE COOK.

#### PECULIARITIES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—It has been doubtless both interesting and amusing to most of your readers to peruse from time to time the correspondence which the articles of "A French Linguist" has elicited on some of the peculiarities of the English language, such as the uses of "shall and will," "should and would," and on "It is me," in your issue of the 21st instant. One cannot but be struck with "A French Linguist's" mastery of the English grammar in all he writes upon those peculiarities, but he needs be reminded, I think, that in every language, and especially so in his own, there are expressions which are not strictly grammatically correct, but which usage sanctions as being accurate and admissible. It may be of some help to him to learn that, besides what he has found in Bain's Grammar on the use of "me" in "It's me," instead of "It is I," Doctor J. Angus, M.A., D.D., in his Handbook on the English Language, says:—"Me" is no form of 'I,' and has even been regarded as an independent nominative. Hence the phrase 'It is me' is less exceptionable than 'It is him.' The French idiom is similar, 'C'est moi'." Auguste Brachet, whom "A French Linguist" has quoted, also says:—"Jusqu'à la fin du treizième siècle 'je, tu, il' servaient exclusivement à exprimer le sujet, tandis que nous disons par une faute étrange moi qui lis, toi qui chantes, lui qui vient, mettant ainsi le régime à la place du sujet." ("Up to the end of the thirteenth century 'Je, tu, il' were used exclusively as the subject, whilst we now say, through an unaccountable mistake, 'Moi qui lis,' etc., placing the objective case in the place of the nominative case.")

The following incident may clear the air about the use of "I," "me," and "moi," and show how very important it is for an Englishman when he speaks French to say "moi" or "c'est moi," and not "Je," i.e., "me," or "it's me," and not "I":—It is related that on one occasion, when both some English and some French troops were quartered at the same time in a certain place, one morning an English soldier was brought up before his colonel for having assaulted a French

soldier. Being called upon to account for his conduct, the English soldier said:—"As I was passing by the French camp last night I was challenged with 'Qui va là?' by the French sentry, and I, understanding the French language, replied: 'Je.' Thereupon, in a defiant tone, the French Johnny called out: 'Come on' (comment). 'Come on!' says I. 'Oui, Come on' (comment), says he; so I went for him and gave him two black eyes."

AN OLD LINGUIST.

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believes also in whips and scorpions, for the cover of his book is decorated with  
an angry-looking seven-thonged scourge, and he dubs the whole effort 'Scorpio.'  
So that when we look to the fair page itself we know what to expect. Nor are  
we disappointed. Mr. Chaloner goes to the opera. Being a good poet, he  
immediately writes a sonnet about it, the which, however, he calls 'The Devil's  
Horseshoe.' We reproduce it for the benefit of all whom it may concern:—

A fecund sight for a philosopher—  
Rich as Golconda's mine in lessons rare—  
That gem-bedizen'd "horse-shoe" at th' Opera,  
Replete with costly hags and matrons fair!  
His votareesses doth Mammon there array,  
His Amazonian Phalanx dread to face!

Figuratively speaking, we (Palmetto Press) might add that Mr. Chaloner steps forward as the champion of Shakespeare's memory, and lands, with  
the force of a John L. Sullivan, upon the point of the jaw of Mr. G. B. SHA W, owing to the latter's impertinent comments upon Shakespeare.  
(Delivered, post-paid on receipt of two dollars, by registered mail, to PALMETTO PRESS, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, U.S.A.)

To Mammon there do they their homage pay;  
Spangl'd with jewels, satins, silks and lace,  
Crones whose old bosoms in their corsets creak;  
Beldames whose slightest glance would fright a horse;  
Ghouls—when they speak one hears the grave-mole squeak—  
Their escorts portendus of feature coarse.  
A rich array of Luxury and Vice!  
But, spite of them, the music's very nice.

"Here you have whips, scorpions, and a knock-out blow with a vengeance.  
The sonnet as a whole is not one which we can approve from a technical or a  
sentimental point of view, but it has points. Henley might have plumed himself  
on that line about the creaking corsets, and the last line, a *tour de force* in its way,  
reminds us of the withering ironies of Byron. It is only fair to Mr. Chaloner  
to add that not all his sonnets are concerned with back-laying. . . . Some  
of them show the tenderer emotions proper to a poet. We like him best, how-  
ever, in his character as metrical bruiser. . . . His book is well worth  
possessing."—*The Academy*, August 8th, 1908.

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